



Lower Murray River fish kill

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The Department of Water and Department of Fisheries have responded to reports of dead fish in the Murray River near North Yunderup.

The number of dead fish between Pinjarra Road Bridge and the river mouth was estimated to be around 30 000 and incorporated a variety of species.

Department of Water officers took water-quality, fish and phytoplankton samples at a number of sites.

“The cause of the event is likely to be poor water quality – specifically low dissolved oxygen levels,” said Dr Tim Storer, principal scientist from the Department of Water’s water science branch.

“Recent rains washed organic matter into the river and disturbed sediment that contains very little oxygen. These two factors resulted in dissolved oxygen falling below levels fish could tolerate.”

Site observations, as well as results from collected samples support this cause.

The Department of Water will continue to monitor the situation through its fortnightly water quality sampling along the Murray River.

The Department of Health advises against eating or handling fish found in these circumstances, or recreating in waterways during a fish kill or algal bloom event.

The departments greatly appreciate the support and assistance of the community and encourage people to continue reporting any fish deaths to the Department of Fisheries FishWatch on 1800 815 507.

Contact: Sarah lau

Phone: (08) 6364 7549 / 0414 507 739